

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-05

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R 121109Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2154

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON OTRA

SUBJ: STAFFING OF EMBASSY AND MEPC

REF: STATE 73704

FOR ASST. SECRETARY DESIGNATE ATHERTON

1. WALTER SMITH OUR POLITICAL COUNSELOR, HAS TO DATE SPENT 2 1/2 MONTHS SINCE LATE DECEMBER AWAY FROM POST, EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR GENEVA IN CONNECTION WITH STAFFING THE MEPC. THE REFERENCED TELEGRAM AGAIN TAKES HIM AWAY "INDEFINITELY," AFTER A RETURN OF ONE WEEK.

2. AT THIS POINT, THEREFORE, I CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT UNLESS SOME DECISIONS ARE MADE, WE WILL, IN EFFECT, NOT BE ABLE TO COUNT ON HIS SERVICES WITH ANY REGULARITY IN THE FUTURE. I KNOW AND APPRECIATE YOUR PROBLEMS AND THE UNCERTAINTIES RE STAFFING THE MEPC. YOU OBVIOUSLY ARE AWARE OF OUR PROBLEMS AND THE DISRUPTION TO OUR ESSENTIAL REPORTING AND ANALYSIS CAUSED BY SMITH'S INTERMITTENT PRESENCE AND PROLONGED ABSENCES.

3. YOU MAY NOT, HOWEVER, BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT OUR SMALL BUT VERY TALENTED POL STAFF IS VERY TIRED. THESE OFFICERS MUST GET SOME TIME OFF, AND HOME LEAVES THIS SUMMER CANNOT BE DEFERRED. THE WORK LOAD IS NOT GOING TO LIGHTEN, AND IT MUST BE DONE QUICKLY AND WELL.

4. THE POINT OF ALL THIS IS THAT I BELIEVE THE TIME HAS COME

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TO FISH OR CUT BAIT ON SMITH. A PRIORITY DECISION WHICH HAS

TO BE MADE CONCERNS HIS FUTURE ASSIGNMENT. IF HE IS TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON THIS SUMMER, WE NEED AND ETD FOR HIM AND AN ETA FOR HIS REPLACEMENT.

5. AS YOU KNOW, MY DISTINCT PREFERENCE IS FOR SMITH TO STAY IN TEL AVIV, BUT WOULD NOT STAND IN WAY OF HIS RELEASE FOR A WASHINGTON JOB WHICH WOULD BE A DEFINITE ADVANCEMENT IN HIS CAREER. I WOULD, THEREFORE, BE DELIGHTED TO LEARN THAT HE WOULD REMAIN AS POLITICAL COUNSELOR HERE UNTIL JUNE OF 1975. HOWEVER, WHETHER HE IS TO STAY OR LEAVE THIS SUMMER, I REALLY MUST INSIST THAT HE BE ALLOWED TO DO THE JOB HERE IN FACT AS WELL AS IN NAME GIVEN OUR OWN PRESSING REQUIREMENTS.

6. I ASK YOU, THEREFORE, TO RELIEVE SMITH OF THE "WAITING WATCH" IN GENEVA (WHICH I BELIEVE IS A WASTE OF EXPERIENCED AND TALENTED MANPOWER). AT THE VERY LEAST, A MINIMUM OF THREE ADDITIONAL NAMES SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE ROSTER. I ALSO REQUEST THAT YOU MAKE A QUICK DECISION ON SMITH'S FUTURE ASSIGNMENT AND LET ME KNOW. WE, IN TURN, WILL THEN BE ABLE TO PLAN THE BEST USE OF OUR RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOU AND THE DEPARTMENT.
KEATING

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